

MATWATCH

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BASH SPECIAL EDITION

VOL. 2, NO. 5

BASHing Funk: Flair Keeps Belt in Baltimore



TV Title

BALTIMORE - The NWA world TV title is in limbo after the Sting vs. Great Muta title defense Sunday. Sting appeared to get the pin to keep the belt at 8:40 after his hand was raised by second referee Tommy Young.

But the NWA "board of governors" have held up the belt after TV replays did not prove conclusive on which wrestler's shoulders were down.

The match, which mixed extraordinary flying moves by both stars, featured nine near-falls. But after a back suplex by Sting, Young scored the fall and raised the Stinger's hand. But original referee Nick Patrick, doused by a spray of Muta's red mist, appeared to signal no fall, much to the anger of the Baltimore crowd.

Muta left the ring with the belt after the match and Sting and his second, Eddie Gilbert, remained to argue with Young.

A decision is expected on Saturday's edition of WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING. RATING: PILEDRIVER.

WAR GAMES/FREEBIRDS & SST VS. ROAD WARRIORS/DR. DEATH/ MIDNIGHT EXPRESS: Jimmy Garvin & Bobby Eaton began the brawl which ended with Michael Hayes' & Hawk's entrances.

At the 17:00 mark, Hayes used the DDT quickly on all four fan favorites. But Hawk's entry at 19:00 turned

BALTIMORE - Ric Flair reversed a spinning toe hold attempt and subsequent cradle by Terry Funk and packaged Funk in 17:23 of the main event of THE GREAT AMERICAN BASH: GLORY DAYS Sunday before an announced sellout of 14,000 at the Baltimore Arena. But the aftermath brawl erupting between Funk & the Great Muta and Flair & Sting drew far more intensity than the championship match.

Flair, seeking revenge for the "injury" which kept him sidelined after Funk's attack at WRESTLE WAR '89, went right after Funk on the outside and the two traded suplexes, chops and punches until Flair scored with two piledrivers at 7:20. Funk crawled outside but Flair chased him, twisted his neck and slapped him as he returned to the ring. But as Flair went for his figure-4 leglock at 9:20, Gary Hart, who accompanied Funk to ringside, distracted ref Tommy Young and Funk clobbered Ric with a branding iron, opening a deep gash. Baltimore, where Lex Luger lost in last year's BASH for a chicken scratch, was in for a bloodbath. Funk piledrove Flair at 10:25 for a 2½ count and attempted to take him outside for another one on the concrete floor. Flair reversed but Funk scored two neckbreakers at 12:45 and 13:25. But Flair gained control of the branding iron at 14:18 and opened up Funk.

The champion missed a flying kneedrop at 16:55 and Funk went for the spinning toe hold at 17:10. Flair reversed and Funk went for the cradle, which Flair also reversed and gained the fall.

Flair then decked Gary Hart but as he's acknowledging the cheering crowd, Muta Pearlharbors him with the green mist. He then bashed him with his NWA title belt, chaired him and joined Funk in a double-prong attack until Sting, who had earlier had a controversial finish against Muta, came to save his former enemy. A nine-minute brawl then erupted which saw the foursome virtually destroy the arena, up and down the aisles in what may go down as the top post-match brawl of the '80s. Afterward, Flair looked at Sting before the national cable audience and said, "Pal, I haven't said thank you in 10 years. Thank you." MATCH RATING: PILEDRIVER-PLUS...the post-match increased it from a POWERSLAM-PLUS. One of the great brawls in NWA and PPV history.

BASH NOTES: After an early rough start with a Terry Funk taped interview glitching, a bad dark shot of Teddy Long and a poorly-directed battle royal, this show began to click....the in-the-cage camera was a fine innovation for WAR GAMES....Luger-Steamboat and Sting-Muta were among the top 10 of this year....The explanation on the TV title situation came too late and was not enough, I'm sure, to satisfy the live crowd....Ross, who'd had laryngitis during the week, did his second-best call ever on Flair-Funk....Some of Gordon Solie's interviews were a bit grim but he asked the right

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Bash PPU: Baltimore Scorecard

2-RING TRIPLE CROWN BATTLE ROYAL: 14 were in this one. Runway entrance nice but they should have been individually introduced. Camera and director missed most of the eliminations. Sid Vicious was survivor in Ring 1 but Steve Williams was left to tackle Danny Spivey & Mike Rotunda in Ring 2. Doc eliminated Mike but Rotunda (from outside) tripped up Doc and Spivey clotheslined him out. Teddy Long declared his two Skyscrapers would split the "450,000" jackpot. **RESTHOLD....**weak direction and finish was a letdown.

BRIAN PILLMAN VS. BILL IRWIN: Good Brian flying moves early but Irwin rallied for a side suplex at 3:43 and clothesline at 6:22. Pillman tossed on ringside table at 7:20 and Irwin threw Pillman into opposite ring at 10:00. But as ref Nick Patrick argued with Irwin, Pillman scored a top-rope cross body block from Ring 2 for the win at 10:18. **RESTHOLD...only for Brian.** He needs better foe.

DYNAMIC DUDES VS. SKYSCRAPERS: Johnny Ace tries early dropkick on Spivey, who didn't sell. Despite a few doubleteam attempts, Dudes were clearly outmanned and outclassed. Lots of "Peanuthead" chants but Sid Vicious cheered every time he was in ring. Spivey missed headbutt at 7:30, Ace tagged in but during 4-way, 'Scrapers double powerbomb Ace & Spivey piledrives for pin at 9:14. **RESTHOLD-PLUS...a WEF-style match** but 'Scrapers are going to be Road Warriors of the '90s.

TUXEDO MATCH/PAUL E. DANGEROUSLY VS. JIM CORNETTE: Tremendous heat throughout. Jim rips Paul E.'s coat off early but Paul powders Cornette and uses phone on Corny's bad knee. Both exchange chokes with the cummerbund but action goes outside at 3:10. Paul boots Jim and does Flair strut. At 4:25, Paul misses elbow but comes up punching. However, Jim does Superman comeback only Homer O'Dell would love, strips Paul of shirt at 5:40. As Paul tries to powder again, Cornette kicks it out of his hand into Paul's face and rips off Paul's pants for the win at 6:22. Paul dashes out in turquoise BVDs. **DRAW...for heat and comedy.**

TORNADO MATCH/VARSITY CLUB VS. STEINERS: Brutally physical. Sullivan and Rick exchange chair conks and rams into ringside table. Scott and Mike go at it inside before Scott goes over top. Steiners get 2 near-falls at 2:33. VC gets double near-fall at 3:18. But as all 4 go off ropes, Scott pulls rope & Rotunda rolls outside. As Sullivan goes for backbreaker on Rick, Scott jumps from top on Rick's back, knocking him onto Kevin & both

Steiners pin Kevin at 4:42. **POWERSLAM.**

U.S. CHAMPIONSHIP/LEX LUGER (Champion) vs. RICKY STEAMBOAT: Luger refuses to wrestle until Steamboat waves no DQ stip. This one has 15 near-falls. Ricky goes to heavy offense and classic moves until Lex catches him with a knee and power clotheslines him at 2:12. Lex scores 2 near-falls before a Steamboat rollup goes for 2 3/4. Lex rallies for 3 stiff lines at 4:55 and 2-count powerslam. Steamer goes for a power chop from top at 9:04 but Luger dumps Ricky into Ring 2 at 9:30. As Luger goes for chair, Ricky reverses and Lex hits turnbuckle and crashes into his own chair. Steamboat controls chair, creams Luger several times with chair to lose by DQ but he bashes Lex all the way back to dressing room. Time: 10:26. **PILEDRIIVER-PLUS...both at top of their games.**

WAR GAMES (Continued from Page 1): the momentum. As Jim Ross was calling it "a demolition derby with human bodies," Hawk scored a series of three neckbreakers on Garvin and finally went to the old Mario Galento hangman to make Garvin concede at 22:18. As the winners left, Animal was trapped in the double cage and the heels pummeled him for 3 minutes before the faces broke through to save. **POWERSLAM.**

BASH NOTES (Continued from Page 1): questions during the Flair interview, concerning the fact that he had no tuneup match....We'll review best & worst pics and lines next week but the best pic was the low angle on the Skyscrapers entrance and best line was Ross' on "demolition derby.".....Some of the entrances were downright spectacular on the ramp: Road Warriors on the cycles, Luger's posing in the spotlights. But overall, I didn't think the total arena was lit as well as in last July's show....I can't say enough about that brawl. It was one of the best ever and certainly the best since Sting/Chris Adams vs. Eddie Gilbert/Terry Taylor in the UWF in '87....Lots of spec that Gilbert would turn on Sting proved a dud. But I wouldn't rule it out soon....Let's get to the all-important **MATWATCH 25 RATING:** Crowd Enthusiasm, 4.0; Quality of Matches, 3.7; TV Production, 3.8; Announcing, 4.5; Total Excellence of Show, 4.0. **TOTAL RATING: 20.0.**

FINAL THOUGHTS: Some money can be drawn from Sting/Flair vs. Muta/Funk but it's going to be tougher if that brawl is not shown on free TV....I'm sure a few folks will pooh-pooh the babyface Flair but not me. He had the place in his hand Sunday and the mechanics of the main event were well-constructed. **FSB.**

Steve Beverly



Most of the attention, aside from hardcore interest in Sunday's GREAT AMERICAN BASH, has been focused on last Monday's ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT story on the Turner-McMahon business competition. Most of our callers believe Vince McMahon came off as an arrogant top dog, though three WEF loyalists phoned to give me the predictable "Vince was great" reaction.

In case you missed ET or don't have it in your area, check THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES on page 4 for a summary. But I'll break down my analysis into a few key points:

---NO NEW GROUND BROKEN. Oh, if you aren't an "inside" fan, perhaps the WEF-NWA was brought into a closer perspective as to their battlegrounds. But no startling revelations were made here.

---CREDIBILITY TO NWA. No matter if you hate or love the Turner promotion, the story was the first by a national TV magazine show to acknowledge the NWA as a serious player in the wrestling business. This, at least, was a breakthrough.

---DISADVANTAGE TO NWA. Despite showing action shots of Sting in Chicago, the pictures and Mary Hart's commentary rightfully showed hundreds of empty seats in the U.I.C. Pavillion. It once again pointed out how far the NWA has to go to make up ground.

---NO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FLAIR. While the piece dealt astutely with two ex-WEF stars, Terry Funk and Ricky Steamboat, who are now mainliners for Turner, not even tacit recognition was given to the NWA standardbearer, Ric Flair, which again shows: as great a performer as is Flair, he is yet to be

acknowledged with the celebrity status of a Hulk Hogan. A tragedy, because Flair is every bit that kind of star, in my humble view.

---TURNER: THE GRACIOUS UNDERDOG. He was and Ted often is not. But he readily conceded that the WEF had outmarketed and outshowcased the NWA in past years. Yet, he didn't make grandiose predictions of overtaking Titan, claims which could be far from substantiated.

---VINCE: WELL, HE WAS VINCE. For one time in his life, I would like to hear this man be more than an imposter on TO TELL THE TRUTH when he says he "doesn't consider them (NWA) competition." And I wish ET was strong enough journalistically to tell the truth about his free vs. pay cable efforts (which Turner has also done) and his efforts to squash recent NWA shows in Nashville and New Haven. One can tell McMahon never went to the Bear Bryant School of Poormouth when he said, "If Ted's not careful, he might be bodyslammed, suplexed and pinned to the mat...1,2,3."

All in all, it was a rather meaningless piece in that it is a story one can't do justice in 2½ minutes. And Mary Hart wasn't exactly the most objective anchor when she's been paid by McMahon to appear at a past WRESTLEMANIA. But it did a better job of dealing with the business competition of wrestling from an informational standpoint that most national efforts which consider it's the Hulkster or not at all.

My own perspective on that AWA proposal we revealed last week: the idea is offbeat and wacky enough to be successful if the right people were handling it. I am of the belief that the next major success in pro wrestling is going to be an innovation probably none of us know of at this point: a repackaging of the repackaging McMahon did in 1984.

But Verne Gagne's track record suggests to me this probably won't be the effort. What's wrong with it? Timing: I would have held this for January or April as a possible replacement if one of the new trash sport series fails to click. Plus, the team structure is almost a direct clone of AMERICAN GLADIATORS and I can assure you, the production values of AG will be far superior to a Gagne/Bob Syres effort.

However, despite one's tendency to laugh off a Verne association, I don't think you can totally sell the idea short. I truly believe wrestling fans will respond to a new presentation concept properly planned and marketed. And I at least admire Gagne & Syres for trying, though I don't predict success in this venture.

THIS WEEK'S HEADLINES

McMahon Barbs Turner On ET Appearance

LOS ANGELES - World Wrestling Federation owner Vince McMahon said last week, in regard to the National Wrestling Alliance, "We don't regard them as competition at all."

In a report on the syndicated ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT, McMahon challenged NWA owner Ted Turner to "be careful, because if Ted's not careful, he might be bodyslammed, suplexed and pinned to the mat....1, 2, 3."

Turner, who in comments last aired, said, "If McMahon wants a war, we're not going to just roll over and play dead," acknowledged McMahon has "done a good job of marketing his promotion and has outmarketed and outpromoted the NWA in recent years."

NWA wrestlers Terry Funk and Ricky Steamboat were also interviewed by ET. Funk said, "I'm waiting for the big one. That's the one when Ted Turner and Vince McMahon tie up. That'll be for the \$100 million house I'm talking about."

Turner Cuts Deal For Canadian TV

ATLANTA - NWA WORLD WIDE WRESTLING will air on Canada's CIV Network beginning in the fall, MATWATCH has learned.

The Canadian deal was closed in the last two weeks and will give the NWA nationwide coverage in September.

Tentative plans are to run arena shows in key Canadian cities in 1990. In another NWA situation, CLASH OF THE CHAMPIONS VIII: FALL BRAWL '89 is scheduled to air from Columbia, S.C., Sept. 13 on TBS but will have to move the show from the University of South Carolina Coliseum. USC will not allow beer to be openly advertised in the building.

Heenan Show Debuts With Strong Ratings

NEW YORK - The USA Network's new BOBBY HEENAN SHOW premiered with a 3.1 rating in its 10:30-11 p.m. (EDT) time slot July 17.

The program drew a 5.4 percent share of audience in 1.49 million homes. HEENAN's rating dropped 11% from the 3.5 of PRIME TIME WRESTLING from 9-10:30 p.m.

PINFALL PROFILE

TAMPA - Not every move he makes will be popular and not every one will work. But new Florida Championship Wrestling owner Wayne Coulter says he's prepared "to run this place like a business."

Speaking by telephone from his Tampa Sportatorium office last week, Coulter—who bought controlling interest of FCW last month—says rumors of the promotion's imminent departure are false.

"This office is very much alive," Coulter told MATWATCH. "The bills are being paid and we have strong financial backing." Coulter did not name his other investors but said he has told his troops, "You've given other people their chances to run the place. Now just give me a chance and we'll show you how to run a business."

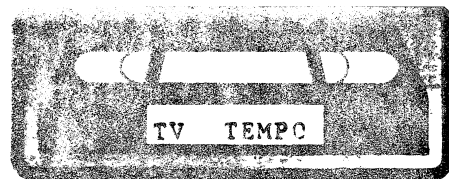
Coulter is already making personnel moves and is not hesitating to take a firm hand. The Nasty Boys, Florida tag champions, were fired after refusing to do a TV job Tuesday night. "We're not going to have that kind of attitude," Coulter says. "Too many good young guys want to work to put up with that."

Another move is a cooperative agreement with Jerry Jarrett's USWA which will see Al Perez and Jeff Jarrett trade appearances between Texas and Florida. Plus, long-term plans are to move the FCW show back to an arena.

Coulter said the PWF belt, originated by Dusty Rhodes—who never ponied up the promised seed money for the promotion—is history. "It was stupid and had no validity," said Coulter. "This is a one-state promotion and we feel the best for us is to make the most out of being the only promotion to originate from Florida."

Mike Graham is working with Coulter in the business office and Steve Keirn handles day-to-day operations with the wrestlers. Gordon Solie maintains a 13.3% ownership in FCW. But an unconfirmed report is that Solie is leaving his announcing slot. Coulter told MATWATCH, "I'm not sure how much longer our situation will last with Gordon. As you know, he's in negotiations with the NWA." (ED. NOTE: As of mid-week, the only confirmed addition to Solie's NWA duties was as an interviewer on Sunday's pay-cable show.)

Coulter does speak with enthusiasm, despite naysayers calling the Florida territory dead. "I've had a sports marketing background and I think you have to develop what you have in your own backyard. I see a ton of potential here and I'm very excited."



(SCW) - Ga. Power d. The Lunatic/The War Daddy; Kevin Dillinger d. Chief Little Bear; Ivan Koloff d. Steve Bennett; Steve Lawler draw vs. Steve Prichard; Mike Golden/Mr. Atlanta d. East Coast Connection but Georgia Power hits the ring after and the four brawl to show's end. BOMB-PLUS.

(ATLANTIC COAST) - REPLAY: Jack Jackson/David Isley lose to Joel & Hoss Deaton; Gene Ligon d. Jimmy Gaws; Tommy Angel d. George South; Ken Shamrock d. The Superstar; Nelson Royal/Sam Houston d. M.O.D. Squad Spike/Brad Anderson. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(FLORIDA) - Frankie Lancaster d. El Cid; Dick Slater d. Dave Spencer; Nikoli Busich d. Rockhard Rick; Lou Perez d. Dennis Knight; Star Rider Blade d. Louis Estaio; MARTIAL ARTS MATCH: Ho Chi Wen double DQ vs. Ron Slinker; FLORIDA TITLE: Steve Keirn wins DQ over Kendall Windham to retain belt when Ho Chi interferes. SHOW OPEN: Diamond Dallas Page drives up in 1962 pink Cadillac with Dick Slater & Diamond Dolls on board. DRAW.

(STAMPEDE) - Ron Ritchie d. Goldie Rogers; Angel of Death d. Kim Schau; Jason the Terrible d. Bill Jodoin; British Bruisers (Dynamite Kid & Johnny Smith) d. Chris Benoit/Kenny Johnson; Davey Boy Smith d. Kerry Brown; Larry Cameron double COR vs. Ricky Rice. POWERSLAM.

(UWA ALL-STAR) - Robotron wins DQ over Danny Deaton; Diamond Timothy Flowers wins countout over Mike Roselli; Ivan Gorky d. Billy Bloodhunter; Buzz Grogan/Mike Lozansky d. Mike Palace/Beau Richards; Chi Chi Cruise d. Nevada Kid. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(ICW/FNN) - Ray Oddyssey d. Ulysses; Tom Brandi d. Brian Walsh; Tommy Rich d. Invader I; Vince Apollo d. Pez Whatley; Nikoli Volkoff/Ivan Petruski d. The Kingpin/Mario Mancini. BOMB-PLUS.

(WEF/USA) - Hercules draw vs. Curt Hennig; Paul Roma d. Sandy Beach; Tito Santana d. Boris Zhukov; Hennig d. Dave Paradise. ANGLES: Bobby Heenan walks off CHALLENGE show; Roddy Piper becomes co-host of PTW. BRO. LUV: the Rev. gets a "PhD of Love" from Genius Poffo. COLISEUM CORNER: Ted DiBiase-Jim Duggan video. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

(WCCW) - WCCW 'WORLD' TAG TITLE: Jeff Jarrett/Matt Borne d. Fuller/Lee for belts; LOSER LEAVE WCCW: Von Erichs d. Blackbirds by pinning manager Harold Harris, so Frank DuSek declares all 3 must leave. RECAP: Eric

Embry-P.Y. Chu'i saga; VIDEO: Bill Dundee. DRAW.

(WEF/SYND.) - [SUPERSTARS]: Jim Duggan d. Gladiator; Bossman d. Jim McPherson but Dusty Rhodes runs in, grabs nightstick & handcuffs and clobbers Bubba with stick; Tully & Arn d. Dave Paradise/Mike Peskin; Foghorn Leghorn d. Chris Evans; Rick Martel d. Terry Daniels; Rick Rude d. Durante; Demolition d. Beach/Mike Sharpe. BRO. LUV: Dusty Rhodes. RESTHOLD-PLUS.

[SPOTLIGHT]: T&A d. Gary Wolfe/Durante; Tito Santana d. Don Champ; Rougeaus d. Dale Wolfe/George Skaaland; Hennig d. Paradise; Hercules d. Boris Zhukov. BRO. LUV/Poffo. BOMB-PLUS.

[CHALLENGE]: Honky Tonk Man d. Dusty Woods; Barry Widowmaker d. Chris Allen; Anabolic Warrior d. Rick Hardy; Haku d. Weiss; Santana d. Zhukov; Other winners: Rockers, Powers of Pain. RESTHOLD.

(NWA/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Sid Vicious d. Davey Rich; FUNK'S GRILL: Terry w. Freebirds; WNN: Gordon replays Freebirds-Warriors cage match, reports on ET story, Heenan walkout & says Flair-Funk 'too close to call,'; Tommy Rich/Scott Hall/Brian Pillman d. Bill Irwin/Iron Sheik/D.J. Meadows; Terry Gordy d. Dick Murdoch when Jimmy Garvin elbows Dick. WRESTLER OF WEEK: Pillman. DRAW.

[MAIN EVENT]: Highlight show. No rating. [WCW]: The 3 Riches d. George South/Lee Scott/Trent Knight; Steiners d. Iron Sheik/Bill Irwin; Skyscrapers d. Tony Suber/Bob Emery; Ranger Ross d. Keith Steinborn; DANGER ZONE: Paul E. calls First Family the Cleavers & accuses Eddie Gilbert of trying to steal Sting's spotlight. RESTHOLD-PLUS....tremendous Flair interview at the end.

(NWA/SYND.) - [NWA PRO]: Dynamic Dudes d. Jerry Price/Cruel Connection; Irwin d. Mark Smith; 'Scrapers d. Steve Casey/Ray Lloyd; Pillman d. Cougar Jay; SST d. Mike Justice/Suber; Ross d. Rip Morgan but Jack Victory & Hall join post-match brawl & Militia hangs Ross w. canteen; RECAP: 'Birds-Warriors in cage. RESTHOLD. [WORLD WIDE]: Dudes d. Smith/Scott; Pillman d. Fred Avery; SST d. Price/Jay; Midnight Express/Steve Williams d. Cruel/Snake Brown/Bounty Hunter; 'Scrapers d. Knight/Justice; Hall/T. Rich d. Militia. PEDICINO'S NOSE: Joe picks Flair, Luger and Warriors M/Ex team at PPV. RESTHOLD.

(CWA) - Key angle: Bam Bam Bigelow turns on Jerry Lawler when Lawler won't call Bam "Mr." No rating offered.

(CWF) - Southern Boys d. Kevin Dillinger/Stomper

COMINGS & GOINGS

SNME SHORTS: By now, you may have read in other newsletters the finish of the Tully & Arn vs. Demolition WEF tag title match in Worcester MA for SATURDAY NIGHT'S MAIN EVENT. I'll just clue you in: it's worth watching this coming Saturday on NBC.

JAKE'S SAKE: Titan lawyers are working overtime in efforts to prepare evidence of Jake Roberts' charity and community service efforts to head off a possible jail term. Jake, despite being free on bond, faces an Aug. 14 hearing on his aggravated battery conviction.

TRYOUT TIME: Five new guys received dark match auditions at the Center Stage last Wednesday: Vince Apollo & Tony Capone as the Gangsters of Love, Dale Veasey & Dewayne Bruce (Dewayne wasn't new) as The State Troopers, and a new protege of Hiro Matsuda. Fans there told me the Gangsters did well, the Troopers so-so, at best, and Matsuda's man needs a lot of work.

DING DONG SCHOOL: At least two Atlanta fans who have hated The Dingdongs called to tell us they did a 3 STOOGES act in their TV matches Wednesday and the fans loved it. They were stunned but the crowd was already into staccato applause to that Huckleberry Hound music when they entered.

QUEEN GLADIATOR: Former GLOW and POWW wrestler Queen Kong tried out July 8 for the AMERICAN GLADIATORS team in North Hollywood. A MATWATCH source who attended the tryouts said the candidates were doing wrestling-style interviews but a producer blew up when that was suggested, insisting they were 'personality interviews.'

CAPTAIN MOUTH: Dennis Coraluzzo tells us he had been assured Lou Albano and Tony Altamore were not to be included on that ill-fated MORTON DOWNEY JR. wrestling show and was stunned to see them at the studio. He was told, "Mort wanted them on." No more. MORT was canceled last Wednesday by syndicator MCA.

TEDDY'S TALE: Teddy Long is getting good-natured ribbing about Arsenio Hall's comment to Slick a couple of weeks back that "that other guy who works for the competition is dressing better than you are."

DADDY'S BOY: FCW owner Wayne Coulter still angry over Dusty Rhodes' admonishing him to "take care of my kid...he'll be a star." The first night of FCW taping after Coulter took

control, Wayne says Dustin told him, "I'm going to Memphis. If you want my belt, you can get it at Daddy's house. That's where it's at." Wanna bet young Mr. Rhodes has wrestled his last for FCW?

SYNDICATION NOTES: The NWA gains FCW's old slot on WSVN, a powerful independent in Miami. The syndie department is structuring some package deals with stations across the USA by tying purchase of some of the Turner colorized movie packages to the carriage of NWA wrestling. Also, expect the move on WPIX to 9 a.m. Saturdays on Sept. 16.

ALL IN THE TOILET: To our knowledge, the only confirmed advertiser pullout over the WEF Dusty/toilet saga was a food company in Houston but sources tell MATWATCH at least two national sponsors were quite distressed. This is not a good time to be playing these games since Donald Wildmon's viewer monitoring group is gearing up for a new round of product boycotts of companies sponsoring what Wildmon's panel considers "objectionable content."

TRAVELING AL: Al Perez is on a current 13-day tour of World Class as part of the trade arrangement with FCW. That swapout likely means Al, structured as top babyface in Florida, won't be getting a belt.

BRUISE BROTHERS: Dynamite Kid & Johnny Smith have been appearing together as the British Bruisers in Calgary. Optimistic talk is that Davey Boy Smith could recover from his spinal injury as early as mid-August but that may be a bit far-fetched.

CWF JOURNEYS: Continental taped Saturday night in Dothan. Some talk is that Dennis Condrey will stay a face only short-term and then revert to his heel ways. Kevin & Kerry Von Erich reportedly have agreed to make periodic appearances through the fall in CWF.

WEF IN MONTGOMERY: We'll be taking in the WEF show at Montgomery's Garrett Coliseum Thursday night. Savage-Beefcake is on top and I'm told the advance is weak but the shows do a fair walkup in the Alabama capital.

SNAKEBIT: Braves runovers have either shortened or pre-empted what some TBS insiders felt were the best 2 NWA MAIN EVENT efforts of Paul E. Dangerously & Jim Ross ever (July 9 & 16). TBS simply eats the shows because the same matches air in syndication with Lance Russell in the same week.

Instant Review: Heenan Show

I remember when the premiere of the GONG SHOW aired on NBC. Have you ever had one of those feelings that you simply weren't sure what something was you just saw? That was me on that Monday afternoon in 1976.

Somehow, that same emotion came over me after viewing the debut of THE BOBBY HEENAN SHOW (USA Cable, Mondays, 10:30 p.m. EDT/PDT). And I'll share my thoughts on two levels.

First, I've never been fond of entertainment which exploits physical infirmities or deficiencies, including unattractiveness. And even though I feel Mike Shaw has done a better job in character as Norman than most NWA traditionalists like, I'm still not crazy about an exaggeration of mental illness. Second, most talk/comedy/variety formats work much more fluently with a live audience present.

I'll hand it to Bobby Heenan: he's one of the funniest performers in wrestling and his barrage of insults are more tolerable than the high-pitched variety of Don Rickles. Yet, while Heenan is terrific with a line, somehow I believe this cable effort would be better suited as a short segment of a wrestling show or overall showcase of WEF performers off-time.

By the time the half-hour elapsed, I had the feeling the producers had watched GONG, THE \$1.98 BEAUTY SHOW, TED MACK'S AMATEUR HOUR and sat in on a session of Overeaters Anonymous, in an effort to come up with a Play-Doh mesh of what they call humor.

Bringing a gel-head on in the guise of an air traffic controller in an outfit that resembled the leftovers of the old Burger King Herb character and following up with a mom-and-daughter comedy act a bit dry on the comedy tended to drag after the first three Heenan barbs. Plus, the Oinkettes were offensive enough (in comedic intent) to make the cartoon pigs on Hee Haw appear to be Shakespearean thespians.

But on a second level, I can see WEF and Heenan hardcores getting into this program--- for a short while. But if the format is the same week-after-week, only the PRIME TIME

lead-in will keep the numbers flourishing after the first three months or so. One consolation: Heenan made no mention of wrestling. Don't.

Cable Ratings Rap

Week Ending July 17	Rating	Share	Homes
WEF PRIME TIME (USA 7/17)	3.5	5.6	1.69 mil.
WEF BOBBY HEENAN (USA 7/17)	3.1	5.4	1.49 mil.
NWA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (TBS 7/15)	2.4	6.7	1.2 mil.
WEF ALL-AMERICAN (USA 7/16)	2.2	7.0	1.06 mil.
NWA POWER HOUR (TBS 7/14)	2.0	3.9	994,000
NWA POWER Repeat (TBS 7/15)	1.0	9.6	495,000

(ANALYSIS: Some impressive stories for both promotions this week and one surprising drop. Roddy Piper's premiere on PRIME TIME elevated that show to its fourth-highest rating of the year. The BOBBY HEENAN premiere held onto a healthy share from 10:30-11 but one has to wonder if the creative end can hold those numbers up. WCW on TBS drew its highest share (6.7) in two years and top rating since a fluke 2.7 the last week of the George Scott era. POWER HOUR scored its top rating yet and the a.m. replay hit a 1.0 for the first time since wrestling was moved to 7:05 a.m. ALL-AMERICAN scored its season low, dipping to 2.2, down 19% from last week.)

MATWATCH SUBSCRIPTIONS

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FCW PLANS TO DEBUT NEW WOMEN'S SHOW THIS FALL

TAMPA - Florida Championship Wrestling plans to begin an all-women's wrestling program as early as September, according to FCW owner Wayne Coulter.

The hour, to be called either WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT WRESTLING or WOMEN OF FCW, would feature stars assembled by Angel Vachon, wife of FCW star Dick Slater. Oliver Humperdink is a leading candidate to book the program.

Coulter says the program would feature an ongoing tournament format and "we would hope it would be closer to POWW in presentation."

A demonstration tape is being prepared for syndicators this week.

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